



## A4. Co-Housing

*Co-housing is a type of intentional community that provides individual dwelling units, both attached and detached, along with shared community facilities. Members of a co-housing community agree to participate in group activities and members are typically involved in the planning and design of the co-housing project. Private homes contain all the features of conventional homes, but residents also have access to extensive common facilities, such as open space, courtyards, a playground, and a common house. This tool would encourage development of more co-housing.*

### Key Issues:

- Co-housing creates an option for people who wish to live in an intentional community.
- Co-housing provides housing choice, but not necessarily affordability.
- Because co-housing does not have a land use definition, new co-housing projects must be held to the same standards as any other subdivision or development. Most co-housing projects apply for a parking requirement reduction, but this can be difficult to qualify for. Creating a separate definition for co-housing would enable development standards to be customized to this unique housing type.
- Co-housing will not substantially expand the number of units in Boulder because it is a specialized type of housing and lifestyle.
- The provision of communal amenities can reduce affordability.

### Background:

Several co-housing communities exist in Boulder, including:

- Washington School Village (<http://www.washington-village.com/>);
- Nomad (<http://nomadcohousing.org/>);
- Wild Sage (<http://www.wildsagecohousing.org/>); and
- Silver Sage (<http://bouldersilversage.wordpress.com/>).

All were developed by Wonderland Hill Development Co., a Boulder-based co-housing developer.

Wonderland Hill Development's Peter Spaulding made the following argument in support of co-housing for seniors: "A recent national study contends that 40 percent of the seniors in assisted care today are prematurely institutionalized. That's what happens when you don't live in a supportive community. It is also unfortunate that, instead of sitting on one of their front porches discussing the issues of the day or playing a game of Scrabble with their neighbors, the average senior in America is watching over 6 hours of TV per day. That's a lot of humanity left on the table. Americans drove 5 billion miles last year between taking meals to seniors at home and nurses on-the-go providing services. For many seniors, that is their only contact with another human during the day. And it is hard on our environment."

### Implementation Options:

1. Consider revising land use regulations to facilitate development of more co-housing.
2. Explore working with developers to identify appropriate locations for new co-housing.

### Goals Addressed Through this Tool:

Strengthen Our Commitments

Maintain the Middle

✓ **Create Diverse Housing Choices in Every Neighborhood**

Create 15-Minute Neighborhoods

Strengthen Partnerships

Enable Aging in Place



Wild Sage Co-Housing. Source: [wildsagecohousing.org](http://wildsagecohousing.org) accessed September 9, 2014